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COMMUNITY SHELTER BOARD LAUNCHES PLAN TO END FAMILY HOMELESSNESS BY 2031

\$1.2M gift from Crane Family Foundation provides first major philanthropic investments in ambitious communitywide effort

[Columbus, OH, October 15, 2026] - Community Shelter Board (CSB) today announced an ambitious plan to end family homelessness in Columbus and Franklin County by 2031, backed by a \$1.2 million gift from the Crane Family Foundation, the first major philanthropic investment in the multi-year effort.

The plan represents a significant shift toward preventing families from becoming homeless in the first place while strengthening pathways to help families experiencing homelessness return to stable housing more quickly. CSB will expand proven prevention and housing strategies, invest in deeply affordable housing, and establish a permanent funding source to sustain family homelessness prevention over the long term.

Ending family homelessness is an ambitious goal, but we believe it is achievable," said Shannon TL Isom, president + CEO of Community Shelter Board. "We know prevention works, we know housing works, and we know we can do more when our community works together. The Crane family's \$1.2 million investment gives us critical momentum to expand these proven strategies and change how our community responds to family homelessness. The Crane family has a long history of civic leadership in Central Ohio, and we believe their commitment will inspire others to join us in this effort. We are incredibly grateful for their leadership and their belief that, together, we can end family homelessness in Columbus and Franklin County."

CSB has set a goal of reaching functional zero for family homelessness by 2031, meaning the community's ability to move families into housing keeps pace with or exceeds the number of families becoming homeless. Family homelessness decreased in the last two Point-in-Time Counts, 9% in 2025 and 3.8% in 2026.

Despite that progress, hundreds of families continue to face housing crises each year. In FY2026, 2,135 families called the Homeless Hotline seeking emergency shelter. Of those, 623 entered shelter, while hundreds of others were diverted to safer alternatives or found other options that prevented a shelter stay.

"As a family, we are inspired by the generations before us who showed us the power of service and trusted us to carry that legacy forward. It is our honor to come together now to make a gift we hope will be truly transformational for other families and the broader community," said Crane Group CEO Dan Crane on behalf of the entire Crane family. "We are grateful for the thoughtful and impactful work The Community Shelter Board is doing to end family homelessness, and we are humbled by the opportunity to lend our support."

The plan builds on strategies that are already producing measurable results. CSB's targeted prevention efforts have achieved a 95% success rate in keeping participating families out of emergency shelter and maintaining stable housing. CSB's Direct Cash Transfer program provides participating families in shelter with a one-time \$1,500 payment to help them secure another housing option. Since the program began in 2023, participating families have spent 61% fewer days in shelter than families who did not participate, 44 days compared with an average of 113 days.

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Over the next five years, CSB plans to scale these approaches while making significant new investments in housing. Key strategies include expanding targeted homelessness prevention to serve more than 1,000 households annually; increasing assistance for expectant mothers; expanding Direct Cash Transfer; creating bridge housing and shallow rental subsidies; expanding rapid rehousing; and developing deeply affordable housing for families.

A central component of the strategy is changing how the community invests in homelessness. Currently, only 5% of CSB's expense budget is allocated to prevention because public funding, which represents 86% of CSB's revenue budget, is largely restricted to shelter and permanent housing options. CSB's previous evaluations show that every \$1 spent preventing a family from becoming homeless saves an estimated \$6 to \$12 in family shelter costs.

The plan calls for approximately \$50.2 million in new investment over five years, including approximately \$15.2 million for prevention, \$30 million for deeply affordable housing and related housing strategies, and \$5 million toward creating an endowment to provide a permanent funding solution to support family homelessness prevention programs.

The total investment is designed to fundamentally change the trajectory of family homelessness in Columbus and Franklin County. By FY2031, CSB's goal is to prevent or divert 1,500 families annually from entering shelter and reach functional zero for family homelessness. Near-term goals include reducing the number of families entering emergency shelter from 623 in FY2026 to 400 in FY2027 and increasing the number of families exiting shelter to housing.

The plan is designed to intervene before a housing crisis becomes homelessness, help families who do enter shelter return to housing more quickly, and increase access to housing that families with extremely low incomes can afford. CSB will continue working with philanthropy, local governments, nonprofit providers, the business community, and other partners to secure the public and private investment necessary to bring these strategies to scale.

About the CSB

Community Shelter Board (CSB) leads the coordinated, community-wide response to homelessness in Columbus and Franklin County as the federally designated Unified Funding Agency (UFA). CSB brings together public, private, and philanthropic resources to fund, align, and oversee a network of nonprofit partners delivering prevention, outreach, shelter, and housing solutions. By connecting data, dollars, and partnerships into a single, outcomes-driven system, CSB works to make homelessness rare, brief, and non-recurring.

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